

# SAlmonid MAnagement Round the CHannel project (SAMARCH) 2017 – 2022

## *Project Summary*

### **What is the SAMARCH project about?**

The **SAlmonid MAnagement Round the CHannel** project 2017 – 2022 (SAMARCH) will provide new transferable scientific evidence to inform the management of salmon and sea trout (salmonids) in the estuaries and coastal waters of both the French and English sides of the Channel. It will provide new information to further improve the models used in England and France to manage their salmonid stocks. Although the project involves working on a number of rivers in the Channel area, the majority of the data collection and research will focus on the four salmon and sea trout “Index” rivers in the Channel area. These are the rivers Frome and Tamar in the south of England and the Scorff, Oir and Bresle in northern France.

SAMARCH is a five-year project with a budget of 7.8m€ which is part funded (69%) by the EU’s France Channel England Interreg Channel programme. It involves 10 partners from France and England who are a blend of research and regulatory organisations, and key stakeholders:-

- **Lead Partner:** Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (UK)
- University of Exeter (UK)
- Bournemouth University (UK)
- Environment Agency (UK)
- Salmon and Trout Conservation (UK)
- Institut National de Recherche Agronomique (France)
- Agrocampus Ouest (France)
- Agence Française pour la Biodiversité (France)
- Normandie Grands Migrateurs (France)
- Bretagne Grands Migrateurs (France)

There are four technical work-packages (**WP T**), a summary of their aims are:-

- **Technical WP T 1**, uses acoustic tracking technology to follow sea trout and salmon smolts through the estuaries of the rivers Frome, Tamar, Scorff and Bresle in the spring of 2018 and 2019 to apportion the mortality rate of smolts between the estuary and the sea. Using both acoustic and data storage tags in sea trout kelts in the Frome, Tamar and Bresle in the winters of 2017 and 2018, to track their movements through the estuary and around the coast.
- **Technical WP T 2**, collects samples of juvenile brown trout from rivers in northern France and the south of England and adult sea trout across in the Channel to build a common genetic data base of trout and sea trout to facilitate the identity of the river of origin of sea trout caught at sea. Genetic analysis to identify the sex of large numbers of juvenile and adult salmon and sea trout will feed into models used in the UK and France to manage salmonid stocks. To develop a transferable map based on sea scape in the Channel area to predict which coastal areas are important for sea trout.
- **Technical WP T 3**, involves collecting data on the marine survival of salmonids and modelling this and historic data from the five Index rivers to develop a predictive model for the abundance of returning salmonids. Analysing large numbers of historical adult salmonid scales for changes in growth rates and sex ratio over time and assessing the fecundity of salmonids; these will all feed into the models used to manage salmonid stocks in England and France.
- **Technical WP T 4**, will be used to ensure the results produced by the project inform, improve and develop new policies for the management of salmonids in estuaries and coastal waters. It will engage with stakeholders in both England and France and further afield to maximise the impact of the results generated by the project

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